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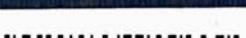

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A GLANCE

AT

SOME OF THE PRINCIPLES OF

COMPARATIVE PHILOLOGY

AS ILLUSTRATED IN THE

LATIN & ANGLIAN FORMS OF SPEECH

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BY

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PREFATORY NOTICE.

THESE pages contain the substance of a paper lately read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh. The object and occasion of reading it is explained in the introductory sentences.

As the views contained in it do not lay claim to originality, it has no pretension to form part of the Transactions of the Society, which, as a general rule, ought to be confined to original communications. But the summary thus put together has been printed off in the hope that it may induce some readers, who have not hitherto thought of the subject, to give a little time to a study in the prosecution of which, however unprofitable otherwise, the Author has often found a pleasing relaxation from severer pursuits.

A GLANCE

AT

SOME OF THE PRINCIPLES OF

COMPARATIVE PHILOLOGY.

In the comparative paucity of literary contributions among us, I have been induced to offer this paper to fill up a deficiency. But I do so with great diffidence. Those who know the subject will think it trite; those who do not, may think it trifling. But I hope there may be some, on the one hand, to whom it may impart information or suggest inquiry; and some, on the other, who, seeing its defects, may yet look upon them with indulgence.

The subject of this paper belongs to the general science of Comparative Philology, though it will embrace but a small fragment of that large department of study. The term philology, as used

to denote the science or philosophy of language, is not well chosen. According to the analogy of other words with the same ending, as zoology, geology, &c., it should rather mean the science of *love* or *friendship* than the science or love of language; but as usage is the despotic mistress of human speech, it is better to yield to her dictates than attempt another name.

Comparative Philology, though it has always been studied or speculated upon by learned men, has only recently attained to something like maturity. It has made within the present century advances more rapid, extensive, and assured, than it had done for centuries before. After long wanderings in the dark, without a guide and without a clear pathway before it, it has begun to see light, and to mark out a road which promises a continuous and successful progress. Principles have been elicited instead of random conjectures; and although there is plenty of conjecture still, as there always will be, and always ought to be, in a progressive science, every day is adding some new certainty to the truths already attained, and is thus preparing the way to further accessions.

The field of Comparative Philology, in its widest extent, is, practically speaking, boundless. To explore and compare the whole languages spoken

throughout the world is a hopeless and impossible task, towards which it would require the accumulated labours of ages to make any approach. The study of even one family of languages is the work of a lifetime, and much must yet be done before that work can be accomplished by the ablest combination and succession of inquirers.

The Indo-Germanic, or, as they are sometimes called, the Aryan, family of languages, has received more general attention than any other of the great branches of human speech. It contains within it a great variety of languages, most of them admitting and requiring great labour to master even their structure, without speaking of their literature; and yet it may perhaps be laid down that of no one of them can the mechanism be thoroughly understood without knowing something of all, or at least of many, of the rest. Not one of these languages, however ancient it may be, can be called a primitive tongue. They are all manifestly the descendants of parents that have disappeared; they have all, too, defects and irregularities which often find their only explanation in some feature exhibited by another member of the family with which for ages they have severally had no connection. All that the best comparative philologist can do in this field is to study generally the

structure and character of these languages collectively, while he devotes himself specially to a few of the number, and borrows aid at the same time from those scholars who have in like manner studied others of them with minute diligence. It is in this way I conceive that those discoveries have been reached which have made the science what it now is. A division of labour into various departments, united with a comprehensive contemplation of the general results, leads to the only method of study that can here be successfully resorted to.

With the limited personal acquaintance which I can boast of with this province of knowledge, and weighted with a good deal of professional or official duty for most of my life, an apology, or at least an explanation, seems to be due for submitting this paper to your attention at all. What I have to say in my defence is this: Having always given a portion of my leisure time to these topics, and believing that I have some general knowledge of what has been done, I am anxious to impart the results to others who may be strangers to the subject, and to induce them to study it themselves, and become better acquainted with it than I am.

I am the more induced to take this step, as I

consider Comparative Philology to be too little studied, and, indeed, to be undeservedly neglected in this country. There are a good many among us who dabble in it; but I have often regretted to see how few, even among scholars and men of science, are acquainted with its principles, or with what has long been going on in it. I do not altogether wonder at this, for it has not the attractions which belong to some other departments of study. It has not the symmetrical beauty, the perfect development, and the faultless harmony of parts, which make the mathematical sciences so alluring to those who engage in them. Neither, on the other hand, does it bring to its admirers any dowry of wealth or distinction, such as often enriches or exalts the successful wooer of the physical sciences. It cannot, again, compete either in moral dignity or practical utility with Logic or the Sciences of Mind, or with those of Politics and Social Organisation; and even towards Literature, with which it might seem to have the closest connection, it has few useful, or at least indispensable, relations to recommend it. The poet and the orator may each touch the hearts or gain the convictions of his audience, though he knows little or nothing of the origin or primitive history of the words which he is using; and thus it is that while other sciences are highly

prized and eagerly cultivated, the science of which I am speaking is, as a study, almost wholly neglected. In this vast empire of ours, where so many different languages are spoken, some of them of the highest dignity and importance, embracing the most diversified varieties of speech, from that of the west of Ireland to that of the east of India, we have scarcely realised the fact that a sisterly tie unites them all; and we owe it in this our own metropolis to the munificence of a private individual that there exists a chair at all which deals expressly with these topics, but in which, it is to be feared, its worthy occupant derives little advantage from popular support. I must add that I think it specially discreditable to us, that with all the zeal and patriotism which I believe to be felt by our Celtic countrymen, there is as yet no chair in any Scottish university devoted to the study of that venerable language, of which we are compelled to foresee, even if we do not desire, the early extinction as a spoken language among us.

In what I have to say on the subject thus chosen, I shall not inquire into the origin of language, or into the philosophy of language in general, or the affinities (if such there be) observable in all languages. I shall confine myself to the

field occupied by the languages already referred to, which have been called Indo-European or Aryan, and to only a small part of that field, as affording a sample of the whole.

Whether or not it be that all human languages have a common origin, it is certain that more than a dozen of them may be traced to the same source. Greek, Latin, Sanscrit or Old Indian, Zend or Old Persian, Armenian, Ossetish (a Caucasian language), Gaelic, Welsh, Sclavonic and its varieties, Lithuanian, Gothic, and the Low German dialects, Alemannic, and the High German dialects, and Old Norse and its Scandinavian descendants, have all such a close resemblance to each other, or rather such an identity in their roots and forms, that no doubt can be entertained of their mutual relationship. These languages as known to us are, or have been, spoken by nations widely dispersed over Asia and Europe, from Himalaya to Hecla; and they have been varied by such diversities that those who have spoken them have been quite unintelligible to each other. The scientific linguist, however, has tracked out their mutual affinity; and the principles of his science enable him to infer facts as to their early history that are not the subject of any record. It is reasonable to conclude that they have been diffused by a suc-

cession of migrations, that their present apparent differences have sprung up since their separation, and that those points of identity that can still be discovered in languages locally remote in their ultimate seat, must have been brought by the several immigrants from their original home. Several writers have accordingly given great attention to these features as throwing light on the state of the Mother Nation before dispersion, and have attained no small success in this attempt.

The great difficulty in this inquiry is, if possible, to methodise the various changes which take place in words in the course of time, and in their transmission from one age or place to another. There is a perpetual tendency to such change, and there are various causes that produce the alterations effected—change of climate and scenery, or of food or occupation, the exigencies of business, a taste for harmony, a blunting of certain of the perceptions, or a thickening of some of the organs of articulation—all these and many other influences, necessary or accidental, tend to produce the effects referred to. And it is easy to see how these may multiply and diverge from each other indefinitely. Take a primitive speech; if it remains in one locality, and shuts out foreign interference, it may continue long with very little

change upon it, as Greek did in Greece, and as Norse did in Iceland, in which last place it would seem as if the language had been preserved from corruption, as food is preserved by being frozen. But let two or three offshoots from the primitive nation emigrate into different countries, they will all by degrees change their forms, and all of them in different ways, according to the circumstances in which they are placed. It will happen at last that the final results in the different diverging lines will have little or no traceable resemblance to each other, and can only be affiliated by following up the pedigree of all to the point which corresponds with what lawyers call the "common ancestor."

This task of affiliation will not be very difficult when the divergence takes place within the historic period. To take an obvious example, if an ignorant person were to compare the French word "evêque" with the English word "bishop," he would see no apparent affinity between these two names for the same office, there not being a single letter the same in both. But their identity is easily recognised by any one who knows that the officer at his first institution bore the name of Episcopus, and that in passing through the Italian to the French, he became *evesque* and then *evêque;* and

in passing through the German to the English he became Bishop, the Episcopus thus undergoing opposite processes of mutilation, by losing his head in one country and his caudal extremity in another.

It so happens, however, that the great changes which have taken place in words have occurred in the prehistoric period; so that there is no positive record of them, and we are obliged to seek for the truth by inference and conjecture.

The disguises by which the identity or affinity of words is thus concealed are of various kinds—by the changing of letters or sounds, by the addition of letters or sounds, and by the suppression of letters or sounds. With regard to all these, the great question was, whether they took place in an arbitrary manner, according to mere chance or caprice, or whether they were brought about with some degree of regularity and uniformity, so as to enable us to challenge a word, as it were, in its passage, and compel it to disclose whence it has come and whither it is going. The old school proceeded almost entirely on arbitrary principles, or rather guesses; the newer school has ascertained that there are rules, not perhaps inflexible nor without exception, but rules which hold for the most part, and give us a solid assurance of

those affinities of which we are in search. The rules or laws to which I refer are twofold: those that fix the relations between large classes of languages to each other, and those which characterise individual languages, for every language has a character of its own.

I propose to illustrate the workings of those influences, and to endeavour to trace, if it can be done, their regular operation, by a comparison of two languages which, geographically and historically, stand at a great distance from each other, but which may be taken as examples of the general system. I shall use for this purpose, as most familiar to us all, the Latin language on the one hand, and the Anglian on the other — by which last term I mean the primitive part of the English language as spoken in England and the Lowlands of Scotland; but excluding the French and other imported additions which so largely enter into modern English.

Latin may be taken as in many respects an approximate type of the ancient languages of Italy, Greece, and India; and the Anglian as representing the Gothic and other Low German, or, to use a simpler term, Low Dutch, tongues, which have spread over so large a portion of Northern Europe. It is chiefly to the changes

which affect the consonants that I shall speak. The vowels lead to a more intricate and evanescent inquiry. (A.)

Let us try the analytic mode of treating the subject, and take some words in the two languages that are manifestly cognate. We shall begin with some of the relations of domestic life: *pater*, *mater*, *frater*—Father, Mother, Brother. Compare these several words together in pairs, and look at the initial and the final letters. In *pater*, Father; *frater*, Brother, we see certain changes of the consonants, so far as the initials are concerned; while in the example of *mater*, Mother, there is no change. If this is a normal instance, it appears that an initial *m* does not change its form in the two languages. Let us see, then, by a wider view, if there are other instances of this stability.

1. The oblique cases of the first personal pronoun singular, and its adjective, *me*, *meus*, Me, Mine, retain the initial *m* unchanged.

2. The Anglian name for the Moon agrees with the Greek word μηνη. The Latin has given her another name, derived from light; but as *we* have Month from Moon, they have *men-sis*, which is obviously derived from a root *men*, or from some similar form.

3. *Mare*, Mere, is a very widely diffused word, which means apparently a body of water, a sea or lake. We use Mere for *Lake*, as Windermere, just as the German-Swiss use *See* for Lake.

4. It may be inferred that the Latin had a lost verb *mano*, to think, or some similar form, which may be discovered from the preterite *memini*, as *cano* gives us *cecini*. If a conjecture may be allowed, it may be surmised that the original meaning of this verb was to *lay hold of* or *apprehend*, both in a *physical* and in a *metaphysical* sense; and hence arise a variety of derivatives in both directions, *manus*, *mens*, *moneo* (which seems to be a causative verb), Mind (with ourselves): probably also Man, either from his having hands, or from his having a mind. I hope the latter.

I give these as select examples without exhausting the subject, but a further examination would lead to the same result. I proceed now to those of the above domestic names in which the letters change their forms.

Pater, Father. Have we any other examples of this change of the Latin *p* into an Anglian F? We have many, and I give a few:—*piscis*, Fish; *pellis*, Fell; *pes, pedis*, Foot; *pullus*, Foal; *pauci*, Few. I give next a remarkable word, which is found in Latin and the Dutch languages in differ-

ent senses. This is *pecu* = Faihu in *Goth.*; Feoh, *A.-S.* = Fee, *E.*; Vieh, *Germ.* This word has a double meaning — denoting, first, domesticated animals, particularly sheep. We have this in old Anglian in Henryson's lines—

> "Robin sat on gude green hill,
> Keepand a flock of *fee*."

Then, secondly, the word in both languages denotes property, *pecu-nia, pecu-lium* in Latin, and in English, Fee, opposed to Liferent, Fee-simple; then Reward—doctor's, lawyer's, servant's fees—"Fee him, father, fee him"—down to the cook's perquisite of dripping, Kitchen-fee.

I shall now notice two combinations of letters which are found in the Latin and Anglian forms with similar significations.

Pl, in Latin, imports in numerous words the ideas of multiplicity, plurality, fulness, or complexity, as *plus, plurimus; pleo, plenus, plerus, plebs; plus* (*duplus*); *plex, plico.* Fl, in English or Dutch, expresses the same ideas in the words Full; Viel, *Germ.*; Folk, Fold. The Scotch Fouth, for Fulth=fulness ("a fouth o' auld nick-nackets,") is identical with the Latin *plenitas*, in which the *n* is unessential.

Pr, in Latin, assumes various modifications to

express the ideas of priority or progress, as *præ, pro, prior, primus, per, porro.* Fr in English has For, Fore, Former, First, Far, Fare.

It thus appears that the change of a Latin *p* into a Low Dutch F is a frequent, and, as a wider examination would show, a *normal* permutation.

I proceed to consider if the change observable in *frater* and Brother is accidental or general. Take these examples:—*Fero,* to Bear; *far,* Bear, Barley; *fagus,* Beech; *flo, -are,* Blow, Blaw; *flos,* Bloom, Blossom; *follis,* Bellows; *frango=frago,* (the nasal being unessential), Break; *fragilis,* Brykle, which is a synonyme for Brittle, though the latter, I believe, has a separate root.

When we look back at the affinities we have been considering as represented by the words *mater, pater, frater,* and endeavour to describe these phenomena in a general way, we find that *m* is a liquid, *p* is what is called a tenuis, and *f* an aspirate, while *b* is a medial.

The results, then, we have thus obtained are these:—*m,* a liquid, remains unchanged; *p,* a tenuis, becomes F, an aspirate; *f,* an aspirate, becomes B, a medial.

Let us now see if the same rule holds as to analogous letters. *m* and *n* are analogous, being both liquid letters; *p, t,* and *k* are all tenues; and if the

analogy of *p* applies to *t* and *k* or *c*, then we should have *t* = Th; *k* = Kh or H; that is to say, each of these *tenues* is turned into its own aspirate.

Let us now see if *n* remains unchanged as *m* does in *mater*, &c. Examples:—*Ne*, No (the negative particle); *nomen*, Name; *novus*, New; *novem*, Nine; *nox*, Night. I may here observe that in Latin nouns, particularly of the third declension, the radical elements can only be got in the oblique cases. Thus *nox* = *noct-s*, as appears from *noct-is*; *dens* = *dents*, *dentis*.

I now pass to examples of *k*, which, if it changes to its aspirate, should become H:—*cord* (καρδ-ια), Heart; *Corn-u*, Horn; *Caput*, Heafod—head; *Collum*, Halse; *Cranium*, Harns, *Sc.*

Let us next try the tenuis *t*, and inquire if it changes, as it should do, into an Anglian Th:—*Tenu-is*, Thin; *tonitru*, Thunder; *tego*, Thatch; *trudo*, Thrust; *tu*, Thou; *tres*, Three; *trans*, Through.

We have next to see whether the analogy of *frater* and Brother is carried out into other classes of consonants; that is, if the aspirate there also is changed into the medial. But in this inquiry we are met with the difficulty, that for some reason or other the Latin has no dental aspirate, the sound of *th* being not a Latin sound. Two Greek words, θυρα, Door, and θυγατηρ, Daughter,

may supply the illustration here wanted. The guttural aspirate in Latin is H, which becomes in Low Dutch G, as *hostis*, Guest; *hortus*, Garden; *hœdus*, Goat.

I have not yet noticed the change, if there be any, which takes place upon the medials. The domestic names I set out with give no illustration of this, but other familiar words will assist us.

The numerals show examples of the dental medial which becomes a *tenuis*. Thus—*duo*, Two; *decem*, Ten; *domo*, Tame; *duco*, Tug; *dux* becomes the Anglian termination Toga, which comes to mean a Duke.

Other familiar words will illustrate the guttural medial G, which becomes an Anglian C or K. Thus—*genu*, Knee (Kniu—Gothic); *gen-us*, Kin; *gno-sco*, Know; *gelidus*, Cold; *gran-um*, Corn.

It is a singular fact that both in Greek and Latin the letter B is a very corrupt letter, particularly as an initial, and affords scarcely any pure example of a direct affinity with a corresponding letter in Low Dutch. This last fact brings me now to an important part of this subject, at which as yet I have merely glanced.

Not only must we in this study investigate the general rules of formation and permutation of sounds as between great classes of languages,

but we must in each language study its peculiarities, for, as already said, every individual language has certain special defects or idiosyncrasies which tend to obscure its affinity with other forms of speech.

The general rules of permutation which I have above laid down and exemplified, apply not only to the Latin and Anglian tongues, but also to the Greek and Indian on the one hand, and the Gothic and other Low Dutch tongues on the other—of which two great classes I have taken the Latin and Anglian as types. These rules form what is generally called Grimm's Law (B). But the Latin language has many peculiarities of its own, which it is essential to know in studying etymology, and of which, therefore, I shall now notice some of the most prominent.

1. There is a tendency in Latin to alter the letter *s* into *r* in the middle and end of words. This tendency is not confined to Latin, but is common also in the Teutonic languages, though perhaps its more familiar illustration is found in Latin words. Every one is acquainted with the alternative terminations of *or* and *os* in nouns of the third declension in Latin, as *honor, honos; labor, labos:* as to which it should also be observed, that in such words the oblique cases

always show the *r*: thus *honoris*, not *honosis*. In neuter nouns of the third declension, too, the *s* of the nominative is always changed in the oblique cases into *r*: as *genus, generis*, for *genesis*. Let us now take an example in the middle of words. We have seen the resemblance between the Latin and Teutonic words, for some family relations, as Father, Mother, Brother. Now, *soror* and Sister do not seem to be equally akin. But there is no doubt that *soror* was originally *sosor*, and that the two words *sosor* and Sister are identical. It may be doubted whether the dental in Sister has been added in Teutonic or has been dropped in Latin.

2. The letter *s* in Latin is apt to disappear from the beginning of words before certain consonants. Thus *sn*, so frequent an initial sound with ourselves, was inadmissible in Latin. This peculiarity helps to explain some hidden affinities. There is no doubt that the Latin *nix, nivis*, is the English Snow, with the S dropped.

3. Another combination of letters unknown in Latin was *tl* in the beginning of words. This explains the conjugation of *fero*, which seems in truth to have only two elements—*fero* and *tuli*, from *tollo* or *tello*: the supine, *latum*, being for *tlatum* = the Greek τλητος. *Tello* or *tollo* = ταλαω, is a cognate of the Scotch Thole, to bear.

4. Peculiar views of euphony in Latin have led to changes of letters. The Latins have a dislike to the combination or juxtaposition of certain letters, and use others as substitutes. They do not, for instance, like to have *p* and *n* together. It is clear from the Greek that *somnus* has for this reason been changed from *sopnus* (ὑπνος), and when we know this fact, we at once connect the word *somnus* with its Latin cognates *sopor* and *sopio*, and with its old English form, Sweven = *sopnium*, a dream. It seems also a peculiarity of Latin that consonants drop away before *v*, which is the equivalent of our *w*. Thus *suavis*, as we may see from the Greek, is undoubtedly for *suad-vis*, which immediately shows its affinity with our Sweet. (C.)

5. Another singular feature in Latin is that a primitive *d* is occasionally turned into an *l*, a peculiarity which has been sought to be explained by the physiological approximation of the organs of articulation when employed in these two sounds. An obvious instance is the substitution in Latin of *Ulysses* instead of the Greek *Odysseus*. Another example is seen in the form of *oleo*, to smell, which is a substitute for *odeo*, as clearly appears both from the Greek and from the Latin noun *odor*. The old form of *lingua* is

stated to have been *dingua* = E. Tongue. This convertibility of *d* into *l* gives us the clue to one of the most remarkable etymologies known—the identity, namely, of *larme* (French) with Tear (English), arising from the connection of *lacryma* and δακρυ, which last leads to the Gothic *tagr*, a tear.

I have already observed that the initial B in Latin is almost always corrupt. In *bis*, *bonus*, *bellum*, the *b* is for *du*. As soon as we know that *b* in *bis* is a substitute for *du*, we then see the connection of *bis* with the English Twice. *Bos*, too, appears to be a substitute for *Gaus*, which connects it with the Indian form of *Gau*, and with the English Cow.

6. The want of Th in Latin is supplied in various ways: *ruber* = ε-ρυθρος; *uber* = ουθαρ; *verbum* = Word; *fores* = θυρα; *fera* = θηρ. (D.)

It is impossible to travel over all these peculiarities; but the specimens given may be enough as hints. I cannot, however, help saying that the field of Latin idiosyncrasies is not yet fully explored, and may lead to many more discoveries. A very good view of what has hitherto been done in this way may be found in the excellent Latin Grammar of Professor Sidler, of Zurich, a University which, on a comparatively small scale, seems

to offer a bright example of enterprising and advanced study, both in literature and science.

But English, too, has its peculiarities, which must also be studied. I have only time to mention a few, and I do so to explain how words truly identical come thus to be insensibly removed from each other. The old Anglian dislikes the combination of *n* before *th* or *s*, and drops it accordingly, while it makes some alteration on the preceding vowel. Thus *tooth* is formed from *tanth*, by dropping the *n* and broadening the *a* into *o*. We shall see the more primitive form in the Nether-Dutch *tand*, except that the Dutch have lost the use of the dental aspirate. By this explanation we see more clearly the connection between the Latin *dens* and the English Tooth, which is to some extent in masquerade. *Dens* we know is for *Dent-s*, and when the Latin sign of the nominative is dropped, we recognise, according to the laws of letter-change, the identity of *dent* and *tanth*, which, on Anglian principles, becomes Tooth. In like manner, the English Goose is for *gans*, which is the Nether-Dutch form; and there is little doubt that this is connected with the Latin *anser*, which has probably been *hanser*.

Amidst the numerous changes we have had occasion to notice, it is curious to observe a few

words that have enjoyed a remarkable "fixity of tenure." I shall notice two of them.

The English word Am is the solitary relic in the Anglian speech of that form of verb which is known in Greek as the verb in μι; in which the first personal pronoun is agglutinated to the verbal root. It is a compound of the substantive verb As or Is with that pronoun. The Indian form is *asmi*. The Greek ειμι is for εσμι. The Latin *sum* is for *esum*. The Gaelic shows the two elements separately: *is mi*. Am is a combination and compression of the two: A being for *as*, and M for *mi*.

The English Widow remains in wonderful preservation, and has almost the same form in Indian, in Latin, and in Anglian. This seems to imply that a surviving wife must have had among all those tribes a special interest or importance attached to her. If we can trust the Norse ballads, the practice of Suttee was not confined to India; but, be this as it may, it is satisfactory that our Western widows, instead of vivi-cremation, have for a long time availed themselves of the milder alternative recommended by the apostle.

The vitality of some words has been the subject of remark by many philologists. The word *sack* is said to be very widely diffused, even beyond

the limits of the Aryan family; so much so that Goropius Becanus, an old Antwerp writer, and the first, I believe, who quoted any of Ulphilas, "facetiously" remarked that, at the dispersion at Babel, "*Nemo œdificantium, in subitâ linguarum confusione, oblitus est sui sacci.*"

I ought before now to have mentioned, what observation shows, that the Latin *j* corresponds to the English *y*, as *jugum*, Yoke; *juvenis*, Young, &c. *V* is for *w*, as *via*, Way; *vellus*, Wool; *vidua*, Widow; &c.

In conclusion, as to the uses of Comparative Philology. Some of these uses are connected with the highest philosophical speculations, for the affinities of words may show the affinities of thoughts; and we are thus often enabled to mark the stepping-stones by which the mind has passed from simpler to more complex, from humbler to more elevated ideas. Take a simple instance. The Latin *vidi*, and the Greek *Οἶδα* = E. Wot, are identical, and show us that *having seen* is equal to *knowing*. Again, it is an interesting inquiry, and one which has given rise to much speculation, whether and how far language has special and separate words for mental ideas, or whether these are not designated by terms which were in the first instance applicable to physical

objects or sensations, and have been afterwards transferred to metaphysical conceptions.

While I am not satisfied that this is always so, there is no doubt that to a considerable extent it is the case; and in many instances we see plainly that the same word has both a physical and a mental signification in the same language. Thus the Latin *spiritus* has this double meaning. But in some cases the truth could only be discoverable by a comparison of different languages. Thus, probably, the Latin *animus* and *anima* would have been considered as merely expressive of mental conceptions, if we had not the Greek ανεμος, which is obviously the same as *animus*, and means the wind as a material object, while the primitive origin of the term is confirmed by our knowledge of the Gothic root *an*, to breathe. It is said, too, that θυμος and *fumus* are the same word, but this is less clear.

In order, however, to attain to correct results on these or similar points, it is necessary that we should be sure of our premises before we draw our conclusions. For it is undoubted that many false deductions have been made from false etymologies. In a very useful dictionary by an able and industrious linguist it was set forth, at least at one time, that the word Man meant Evil, while the word God

meant Good. This would be a very important fact if true, and would throw a very striking light on the history of natural religion. But it is very doubtful if there is any etymological connection between God and Good. The name of the Deity is of very obscure origin, and the best authorities consider that its derivation is quite different; while certainly the great probability is that not goodness, but power or greatness, would be the primary attribute ascribed to the Deity. On the other hand, it is certain that the word Man has no connection with any word meaning evil. It may possibly come from *manus*, or it may be connected with *mens*. But it has no affinity with Evil, the word which is in view having quite a different formation.

A very excellent schoolmaster, and in some departments a good philologist, thought he had discovered that the Greek δικαιος, which is a simple derivative from δικη, justice, was a compound of Ζευς, *Jupiter*, and καιω, *uro*; and this proposition he, with a marvellous perversity of ingenuity, supported by the analogy of the Latin *justus*, which he said was a contraction of *Jove ustus*. How he disposed of *jus* I am not able to say. Speculations like these are obviously false lights that only lead us astray.

It was somewhat in the same way considered

that Horne Tooke—a man of piercing genius, but of considerable ignorance and much arrogance—indulged in a variety of rash and mistaken etymologies, which gave him occasion to inculcate a very fallacious philosophy.

This subject, then, requires to be guarded by strong safeguards, as to which I should lay down these two important canons:—

1. Before tracing any connection between physical and metaphysical terms, whether in the same or different languages, we must be certain that they are etymologically identical or connected, for any uncertainty on that matter will lead to a corresponding uncertainty in the result.

2. Even when we have proved a complete literal identity of such terms, we cannot at once infer that there has been a metaphysical transference from the one meaning to the other unless we have examples of similar or analogous transference of meanings in other cases. For although in general the same combination of letters in a root has only one meaning, which may be variously modified, it is not absolutely certain that it may not play a double part and have in some way acquired a diversity of significations wholly unconnected.

Passing from these considerations, as requiring a much more deliberate discussion, I pass to other topics.

Language is, in all respects, the most imperishable of all monuments, and is by far the surest and clearest guide to what may be called the prehistoric progress of man. It is as certain as if we had a contemporary record of the facts that there existed, ages ago, a primitive Aryan race somewhere near the north-west of Asia, and that from that region, as from a hive, successive swarms have issued in different directions, bearing their primitive language with them, but having it modified in various ways, according to the nature of the new countries in which they settled, and the new circumstances in which they were placed. It does not necessarily follow that all the nations now speaking an Indo-Germanic tongue are of Indo-Germanic blood, because it happens sometimes in conquests that the invader imposes his language on the country which he subdues, as the Romans did with the Romance provinces; and sometimes that he forgets his own tongue and adopts that of his new country, as happened to the Northmen in France. But in general the language and the ethnology will agree; and where such is the case, important considerations arise.

The fact suggested by history, and rendered certain by the study of language, that so many great or important nations are so near akin, is one

of immense moral and social significance. That we here in Britain, and that all the Germanic and Romance races should be so closely connected together, and connected also with the men of Greece and Rome; and that within the same family should be comprehended the Aryans of India, and the Sclavonians, in all their diversities of dialect; and again, that to these must be added our Celtic neighbours both of Wales and Ireland, is a consideration that suggests views which seem to justify bright hopes for the future of the civilised world. All these tribes can be traceably shown to have started with the same tongue, and in all probability to have possessed the same religion and the same laws and customs. The religious element is conspicuous in them all, and is apparent both in their language and history. That they had a deep reverence for the Unseen; that they perceived behind the sensuous appearances of nature a Divine Mind which formed and guided those phenomena; and that they believed the actions of men to be under the observation of that Power, and liable to a retribution according as they might be good or evil,—these feelings, which are the essence of religion, cannot be overlooked in the history or in the language of these races, whatever varieties of form may have been occa-

sioned by qualifying circumstances or contact with other nations. The most important of these modifying influences has undoubtedly been the substitution of a pure monotheistic belief, derived from the peculiar tribe to whom, in the course of Providence, that creed seems to have been specially intrusted. It is remarkable, however, that Christianity, though springing from a Semitic root, has flourished with its greatest vigour when grafted on a European stem; and it is not beyond our hopes that an approach to Christian civilisation among all the Aryan nations may be nearer than at one time seemed likely.

In other respects the great Aryan races have always held a high position. The domestic relations have been specially honoured among them. It does not appear that polygamy has ever prevailed as a general institution, nor that women have ever been systematically degraded from their true place and influence. Among our own immediate ancestors it is certain that the position of a matron was eminently influential.

In like manner we cannot fail to see that the sentiment of law and order was deeply impressed upon their minds; while, at the same time, there was as strong a tendency to assert individual freedom when restraint was unnecessary. This was

a natural result of that reverence for the sanctities of domestic life which is the foundation and safeguard of political organisation.

Looking at these resemblances and at this connection of their origin and history, we ought not to despair that, with time and patience and the use of the best means for the end, a spirit of concord and peace may be gradually diffused over the whole of those countries among men who are thus in every way brethren in origin and in character. Diversities of disposition will always arise under diversities of situation. In one soil or climate, one class of faculties or feelings will preponderate over others: this is natural and inevitable; it is right and beneficial. The very diversity makes each nation stand in need of what its neighbour can supply, just as a diversity of products is the source of amity by being the occasion of commerce. All these nations can, in different ways and degrees, contribute to the happiness of life, to the improvement of character, and the advancement of civilisation. The same thoughts lead us to feel with great solemnity that none of these kindred nations, however at present they may seem to be behind or below their brethren, ought ultimately to be despaired of. There may be some races of men—there would seem, indeed, to be

some — who have fallen so low, or who have been destined to play so humble a part in the world's history, that they cannot be permanently elevated, but disappear and fade away before the spread of civilisation as the stars depart before the rising sun. But none of the nations of whom I have been speaking can be considered in that position. There is none that we may not hope to see in the enjoyment of all civil blessings, if the right means are taken to improve them by the three great processes of promoting industry, encouraging freedom, and enforcing law.

NOTES.

A.

THE *vocalismus* of the Aryan languages is an interesting but intricate subject. In the German branches it can only be well understood by a reference to the Gothic, which is remarkably pure and perfect in its use of the vowels. I shall here notice, by way of illustration, a few of the relations in which the Latin vowels stand to each other, and to those of the Anglian division. The same examples of *pater*, *mater*, and *frater* are instructive here, the short Latin *a* in *pater* being represented by the Anglian A, while the long *a* in the other words is changed into O. It will be found generally that a long *a* in Latin, and sometimes the cognate form of a long *e*, is represented in Anglian by an O or a OO. In this way we can see how the *strong* conjugation of *ago*, *egi*, *actum*, in Latin, is exactly analogous to that of Take, Took, Taken, in English.

In Latin a long *u* is often a corruption or metamorphosis of the diphthong *oi* or *oe*. Thus *punio* is for *poenio*, as we see from the cognate noun *pœna*, which word is considered to be identical with the English *fine*, in the sense of a penalty. *Munio* is for *mœnio* as connected with *mœnia*. *Unus* is for *oenus*, which identifies it with the old Anglian Ain, One; and this leads to the remark that the sound of O in Southern English is often the representative of an older

diphthong, *ai*. Thus English Stone = Scottish Stain or Stane ; Bone = Bain or Bane ; Road = Raid.

A long vowel in Latin is often the indication of a suppressed consonant. Thus *rēmus* is for *retmus*, corresponding to the Greek ε-ρετμος : *īdem* for *isdem*. If *nidus* in the same way is for *nisdus*, we see a clear connection with the English Nest.

B.

The rules of permutation which prevail between the classical and other ancient languages and those of the Low German type have, as here mentioned, been described as Grimm's Law, having been fully explained in Grimm's invaluable Dutch Grammar. But there seems no doubt that whether or not the idea occurred independently to Grimm, the same rules had previously been promulgated by Rask in an Essay, which gained a prize from the Royal Danish Society for Science, "On the Origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic Language," and which was written in 1814, and published at Copenhagen in 1818. In this work he traces the affinities of Norse with Greek and Latin, and states the transitions which the letters make in passing from the one to the other. As the book is not very common, I shall insert a translation of what he says on the subject. The Norse and Anglian words generally correspond.

"In the mute consonants these changes are frequent :—

π to f, as : πλατυς, flat ; πατηρ, father.

τ to th, as : τρεις (*tres*) three ; *tego*, I thatch ; τυ, *tu*, thou.

κ to h, as : κρεας, hræ (Norse for a dead body) ; *cornu*, horn ; *cutis*, hide.

β is often unchanged: $\beta\lambda\alpha\sigma\tau\alpha\nu\omega$, blade; $\beta\rho\upsilon\omega$, burn (a well); *bullare*, to bubble.

δ to t, as: $\delta\alpha\mu\alpha\omega$, to tame; *dignus*, tiginn (Norse for exalted).

γ to k, as: $\gamma\upsilon\nu\eta$, quean; $\gamma\epsilon\nu\sigma\varsigma$, kin; *gena*, chin; $\alpha\gamma\rho\sigma\varsigma$, acre.

φ to b, as $\varphi\eta\gamma\sigma\varsigma$, beech; *fiber*, bearer; *fero*, to bear.

ϑ to d, as: $\vartheta\upsilon\rho\alpha$, door; $\vartheta\eta\rho$, deer.

χ to g, as: $\chi\upsilon\omega$, gush; $\chi\sigma\lambda\eta$, gall."

Rask's Essay, which is distinguished by great learning, and contains the germs of very many philological truths since developed, was translated into German by Vater in 1822. Grimm afterwards extended this law in a very singular and striking manner into the relations between the Low German and High German dialects. But however reluctant some Germans may be to acknowledge the claims of rival countries, particularly of Scandinavia, Bopp, who is an undeniable authority, acknowledges in his preface to his 'Comparative Grammar' the priority of Rask's discovery. It is remarkable that Rask noticed the anomaly that seems to be presented by the Latin and Greek B. The system of change in question is called in German Lautverschiebung, Sound-shoving or Sound-shifting.

If the student wishes to remember these rules, he may take the following doggerel to help him:—

> If Classic languages you care
> With our Low German to compare,
> These letter-changes you'll discern:
> The Tenues into Aspirates turn;
> The Medials next as Tenues show,
> And Aspirates into Medials grow;
> But B's a wild and wilful letter,
> That's very hard to guide or fetter.

C.

The Latin *v*, equivalent to our W, is in some words supposed to have been originally preceded by a *g* that has dropped out; and there can be no doubt that there is some close connection between g and w. In the Welsh, I believe, they are convertible letters; and we see how Teutonic words adopted in French assume a prefixed G, as *guerre*, War; *garant*, Warrant; *garde*, Ward, &c. If *vivus*, as has been supposed, was originally *gvigvus*, we perceive that it is identical with the Anglian Quick, which means originally Living, and then Lively or Rapid.

The Latin *v* is often omitted after *s* and before a vowel; *sopor* and *somnus* = *sopnus*, ought truly to be *svopor* and *svopnus*, which correspond more closely to the Anglian Sweven, as well as to the cognates in other tongues. *Sudor*, as the Greek shows, ought to be *svidor*, which agrees with the English Sweat. *Sŏror* = *sosor*, ought to be *svosor*, in conformity with which we know that the Dutch equivalent ought to be Swistar.

D.

The want of the Dental aspirate in Latin gives rise to one remarkable deficiency in the language which deserves special notice. The Greek δω (in διδ*ω*μι), and θεω (in τιθημι), are separate roots; and the Latin possesses one of them, *do*, of which it makes very liberal use, particularly in composition. But of the other, θεω, there seems to be no trace in Latin under any disguise that has yet been detected. This root, however, thus wanting in Latin, plays a most important part in all the Dutch languages, for it is from θεω, and not from δω, that we derive our verb "do,"

so useful both as a principal and as an auxiliary verb, and which is supposed to enter essentially into the inflection of all our verbs, following the *weak* form of conjugation. There is no Dutch derivative from the Greek δω. While the Greek, therefore, has the *two* roots, the Latin and Dutch have each one, and each a different one. It has sometimes been supposed that there is a semblance of affinity to the Greek θεω in some of the Latin compounds that end in *do*, as *circumdo*, *pessundo*, and *credo* (which is undoubtedly a compound word), but this cannot be affirmed with certainty, and as to the two first, at least, may be confidently rejected.

Supplementary Note.

Reference has been made in the preceding paper to the subject of Causal or Causative verbs, which, as relating to different languages, is highly important and curious, but in some cases very obscure. It is believed that the Sanscrit has a general formula by which a primary verb is converted with ease and regularity into a Causal. It is remarkable that the Gothic has also an easy expedient of this kind. The root, or other convenient form, of the primary verb is taken, and the letter Y added, while the conjugation of the verb is changed from *strong* to *weak*. Thus the root of the verb to Sit is Sat, and in the way just indicated the verb Sat-y-a is formed, meaning, to make to sit. The root of Liga, to Lie, is Lag, from which comes Lag-y-a, to make to lie, &c. In the more modern Dutch languages, and in particular in Anglian, the Y does not appear, but the radical vowel is modified and the conjugation changed. Thus from Sit comes Set, to make to sit; from Fall, Fell, to make to fall; from Lie, Lay, to make

to lie; from Drink, Drench, to make to drink; from Quail, Quell, to make to quail; from Rise, Raise, to make to rise.

The formation of Causal verbs in Latin is involved in much confusion, and the short formula observed in Sanscrit and Gothic has probably been little used, in consequence of the tendency in Latin to compound the primary verb with *facio*, as *calefacio = calere facio; patefacio = patere facio*, &c. But a few Causals can be pointed out formed on a simpler plan. Most of these seem to belong to the second conjugation, as *moneo*, mentioned in the text, if it be from *memini*, to make to remember. *Doceo* seems to be similarly formed in this way. *Disco* is probably for *dac-sco*, from a root *dac-o* (as the Greek form indicates); and from *dac-o*, *didici*, to learn, may come *doc-eo*, to make to learn, to teach. Some Causals have a reduplicative form as *sisto = stare facio; gigno = gnasci facio*. Factitive verbs from nouns or adjectives are sometimes formed with *go*, as *pur-go*, from *purus*, to make pure; *litigo*, to make a lawsuit; *fatigo = fessum facio*. But many are formed directly from the primary word by assuming a verbal form in the first or fourth conjugation, as *firmo*, from *firmus; finio*, from *finis*.

It is a great pleasure to acknowledge the appearance of a highly valuable contribution to the study of Philology, and of the Aryan Religions, in the fifth volume of Dr John Muir's Sanscrit Texts, in which it is impossible to say whether we should most admire the learning, the modesty, or the sound judgment which it displays.

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